

AGENDA ITEM III B

PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Louisiana State University at Alexandria

Certificate in Pharmacy Technology

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In late Fall 1999, the Board of Regents received a proposal from Louisiana State University at Alexandria requesting permission to offer a certificate program in Pharmacy Technology. The proposal had recently been approved by the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors. Upon receipt of the proposal, the staff of the Division of Academic Affairs compiled a list of prospective consultants who would review the proposal and conduct an on-site review. This list was sent to the institution in late December 1999 for feedback on the selection of consultants. Ultimately, Don Ballington, Director of the Pharmacy Technician program at Midlands Technical College in Columbia, South Carolina, and Ray Vellenga, Director of the Pharmacy Technician program at Century College, were selected and agreed to serve as consultants. Consultants, accompanied by Dr. Ann Britt and Dr. Stephen Scott of the Board of Regents' staff, conducted the on-site review on February 21 and 22, 2000. The consultants submitted their report upon completion of the site visit, and this document was forwarded to the institution and System on March 15, 2000. On March 27, 2000, the Board of Regents received the first of several institutional responses addressing the consultants' and staff's concerns.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **objective** of the proposed program is to prepare individuals for careers as pharmacy technicians, academically and clinically, to assist in meeting pharmacy care needs in central Louisiana.

At the completion of the 36-hour **curriculum**, students will be awarded a Certificate in Pharmacy Technology. The program will be administered through the institution's Division of Nursing and Health Sciences.

Two factors have served to increase the demand and opportunities of pharmacy technicians, thus establishing the **need** for the proposed program at LSU-A. The primary force has been the enormous change in the health care sector, wherein pharmacy services have expanded and grown at an accelerated rate. As the role of the pharmacist has evolved into pharmacy care, the need for technicians who support and practice under the direct supervision of the pharmacist has markedly increased. Many of the traditional pharmacy functions are now being performed by the pharmacy technician. As such, the pharmacy technician has become the key person assuring the smooth functioning of traditional pharmacy services. The second factor occurred in October 1997 when the Professional and Occupation Standards of the State of Louisiana promulgated the requirement of certification of pharmacy technicians and completion of a Board approved program for certification

eligibility. LSU-A conducted a needs assessment in 1998 of 24 pharmacies in the central Louisiana area. These pharmacies employed a total of 72 pharmacy technicians and 95% of the pharmacies surveyed indicated that the need for technicians will continue to increase annually and position availability will more than double over the next five years.

It is projected that **60 students will enroll** in the program during the first year, and that enrollment will increase to 75 students for year two and subsequent years. Projections for enrollment are based on the needs assessment data, advisory committee input, and the availability of human and community resources. It is also projected that **15 individuals will graduate** at the completion of the first year of the program and 20 graduates each year thereafter.

Only **one new full-time position**, the program director, will need to be hired to enable LSU-A to staff this program. This individual will teach and coordinate the program within the normal work day for all full-time faculty. The non-pharmacy courses included in the program would be taught by faculty who already teach these courses on an ongoing basis.

Library and other educational support services expenditures are projected at \$4,000 for year one, \$3,000 for year two, and \$2,500 per year for years three and four. The institution has also budgeted funds for the various fees associated with filing for ASHP accreditation.

The program must obtain **approval** from the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy once it is determined that the program meets competencies outlined in the Boards' Pharmacy Technician Competency Statement. The program is eligible to apply for **accreditation** by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) upon the implementation of the program. The program must complete one training cycle and have at least one graduate prior to the receipt of accreditation, at which time accreditation will become retroactive.

Total projected costs for the program are \$80,642 for year one, \$71,192 for year two, \$63,193 per year for years three and four.

CONSULTANTS' RECOMMENDATIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

The consultants noted the following weaknesses/areas of concern. The institutional response is noted in *italics*:

Need for the Program

1. Survey results did not demonstrate an overwhelming need for the training program. A broad survey would have shown tremendous need. Employment, in reality, should be greater than reflected by the survey due to community need for these skilled workers. Formally trained technicians will help relieve pressure on the profession which is a result of increased demand for pharmacy services coupled with a shortage of pharmacists.

A 1998 needs assessment survey revealed that 22 of 24 pharmacies surveyed in Central Louisiana (95%) indicated that the need for Pharmacy Technicians will double over the next five years. This increase from 73 to 145 employed Pharmacy Technicians is more reflective of

anticipated needs then data projections from the Louisiana Department of Labor (1997) which project a growth of 13 in Region 6 by year 2006.

Potential Students

1. The proposal did not demonstrate evidence of potential students, nor is there an indication of magnitude of currently employed technicians who will need upgraded skills and would be entering the program. The college and health sciences department should undertake recruitment actions to announce the program to currently enrolled students. Recruitment efforts and announcements should extend to community pharmacies, health system institutions, and the local media, i.e., TV, radio, and newspapers.

Once approved, recruitment efforts and announcement by way of a variety of media will extend to currently enrolled students, the public, community pharmacies, and health care institutions. As indicated in the needs assessment data, 53 current employees of pharmacies could benefit from enrolling in the Pharmacy Technician Program.

Curriculum

1. LSU-A should consider cooperation with the existing pharmacy technician programs offered at Bossier Parish Community College and Delgado Community College for lecture course work. These programs are also based on the ASHP model curriculum and could provide the lecture portion of the professional core. Laboratory and experiential remain responsibility of local instruction and coordination.

Since the programs are based on the ASHP model curriculum, LSU-A will cooperate with Bossier Parish Community College and Delgado Community College to share in the delivery of the didactic components of the curriculum and in establishment of a standardized statewide curriculum. This agreement is based on the understanding that each university in the distance learning initiative agree to obtain and maintain full ASHP accreditation. Discussions regarding this cooperative effort have already begun.

Library and Learning Resources

1. Current library holdings would not adequately support the pharmacy program because of specific reference literature needed for day-to-day instruction. The proposal addressed a budget that included funds to purchase additional reference sources.
2. The proposed budget for succeeding years needs reevaluation. Many of the resources are annual editions and will need to be purchased each year.

The projected budget has been reevaluated and adjustments made to accommodate inclusion of annual editions.

3. Specific references, i.e., *Facts and Comparisons*, *Am. Hospital Formulary Service*, *PDR*, *Am. Drug Index*, *USP-NF*, *Patient Drug Facts*, periodicals, etc., should be housed in the pharmacy laboratory, however counted in library holdings. These are reference sources specific to pharmacy. The advisory committee could recommend others.

An array of references specific to the study of pharmacy will be housed in

the pharmacy laboratory. Additionally, audiovisuals and computer assisted instructional support materials will be available in the learning resource center, housed near the pharmacy laboratory.

Facilities and Equipment

1. The institution should actively seek equipment donations from local health system institutions and/or other sources.
Once approved, the faculty and staff will begin the organized process of requesting and accepting donated material/equipment from retail and institutional pharmacies.
2. Insure security for medications in the laboratory and instruments such as sharps (syringes and needles).
3. Use creative scheduling to provide small laboratory sections, which will utilize space efficiently and provide increased individual instruction within confined laboratory space.
As with all laboratory classes at LSU-A, the pharmacy laboratory will be created to simulate reality and provide quality-practice based instruction. Sufficient shelving, obtained through donations, construction, and purchases will be designed or obtained to promote an environment conducive to learning and psychomotor skill development. Elements essential to the pharmacy laboratory operations such as privacy, safety, and security will be incorporated into the development of the laboratory. Scheduling of laboratory sections will provide an optimal faculty-student ratio of one-twelve (1:12) and permit independent practice.

Financial Support

1. Proposed financial support for this program is inadequate. Reevaluation of the proposed budget is needed. Consideration should be given to start-up and continued funding in the areas of supplies and services to insure adequate funds are available to meet instructional needs. Many materials will be needed for instruction and practice of daily drug preparation, handling, storage and dispensing. Start-up funds needs should receive special attention.
The budget will be increased as recommended by the consultants at their exit interview to provide quality pharmacy technician education. To be included in the budget are items necessary for drug preparation, handling, storage, and dispensing (shelving, intravenous solutions, intravenous tubing, IV admixtures).
2. A separate budget line should be developed and thus establish accountability for program operation.
A separate budget line will be established and maintained for program operations.

Faculty

1. LSU-A should seek counsel from the advisory committee concerning potential faculty. The search for faculty should include pharmacists with both community and institutional experience.

Advisory committee members have been and will continue to be utilized in all phases of program development, implementation, and evaluation. This will include members on the search committee assisting with selection of faculty who possess both institutional and retail experience.

A full-time pharmacist will be employed to provide classroom instruction and to direct the program. As the number of students in the program increases, part-time and joint appointment faculty will be obtained to maintain quality and meet accreditation standards.

Accreditation

1. LSU-A should submit an application for accreditation with initiation of instruction. The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) is the only organization to accredit pharmacy technician training programs. Application can be made with the initiation of the program. The training program must have at least one (1) graduate before an accreditation review is scheduled.

As set forth in the proposal, LSU-A will apply for accreditation upon initiation of the program. It is anticipated that the application for accreditation will be submitted in February 2001 with a potential site visit being scheduled in May 2001.

General Comments, Observations, and Suggestions

1. LSU-A should consider including a separate course in anatomy and physiology.
At this time, LSU-A does not provide a free standing anatomy and physiology course whereby students can enroll without first completing a four-credit hour Introduction to Zoology course. Thus, addition of a separate anatomy and physiology course would add an additional eight credits to the pharmacy technician curriculum. This issue will be discussed with the Pharmacy Technology Advisory Committee.
2. LSU-A should consider sites in addition to community and institutional pharmacy, i.e., home health.

Consideration will be given to the utilization of experiential sites which are evaluated as quality sites for the provision of pharmacy technician education.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The consultants and Regents' staff note that the proposed program does fall within the role, scope, and mission of LSU-A. The proposed curriculum, based on the ASHP model curriculum, includes all components required of an accredited program and meets the needs of present and future pharmacy technician practice. The certificate in Pharmacy Technology, a three (3) semester program, is an appropriate approach to technician training. Admissions criteria and prerequisite course work are clearly indicated, and students entering the program will be prepared. Additionally, general education courses are outlined with appropriate prerequisites to insure students are ready for these courses.

As previously mentioned, through several institutional responses, the institution concurred and adequately addressed the recommendations identified by the consultants and the Regents' staff. Additionally, the institution willingly complied with the consultants' and staff's concern that the proposed program work closely with the existing programs at Bossier Parish Community College and Delgado Community College. The consultants noted to institutional officials that the State of Louisiana has an opportunity to be the first state in the nation to provide a standardized pharmacy technology curriculum, one that meets standards for accreditation. This collaboration would be a model for ASHP to be used in evaluating distance learning. Given that all areas of concern that were identified by both external consultants and Board of Regents' staff were properly addressed, the staff recommends the following:

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Board of Regents grant approval for the proposed Certificate program in Pharmacy Technology (CIP Code 510805) at Louisiana State University at Alexandria.